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The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Identical letters dated 8 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith identical letters dated 8 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, containing a complaint against the Israeli occupation authorities, which decided to build a racist separation wall in the Occupied Syrian Golan, east of Majdal Shams (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 36 and 52, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 8 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you a complaint against the Israeli occupation authorities, which have begun building a racist separation wall in the occupied Syrian Golan.

In June 2011, the Israeli Government decided to build a racist separation wall east of Majdal Shams in the occupied Syrian Golan, allegedly in order to prevent Palestinians and Syrians from crossing the ceasefire line and reaching occupied Majdal Shams. The Israeli Corps of Engineers in fact began constructing the wall at the beginning of this past July, and an agreement was reached with Israeli contractors to build a wall eight metres high and four kilometres long. It should be noted that the ceasefire line between Israel and Syria in the occupied Golan is approximately 100 kilometres long. The Israeli Chief of Staff, Benny Gantz, has ordered that construction of the wall should be completed in September 2011, that is to say, before the United Nations vote concerning recognition of the Palestinian State. Israeli army bulldozers and heavy equipment have been excavating and levelling a strip of land a few metres wide along the ceasefire line next to Majdal Shams, from the Khillat al-Ramlah area in the north to al-Naqaqir in the south.

The wall that Israel has begun building will separate the occupied portions of the Syrian Golan from and break their geographical contiguity with the Syrian homeland. It will also result in the seizure of vast areas of land, estimated to be hundreds of dunums, which belong to Syrian Arab farmers who were deprived of their land when it was appropriated in the mid-1970s. The Israeli army took control of that territory after the conclusion of the 1974 Disengagement Agreement. The land, which is part of the occupied town of Majdal Shams, was used to grow grapevines, wheat, chickpeas, barley, apples, almonds and figs.

The aim of building a wall in the occupied Syrian Golan is to establish a new political and security reality, and it will also serve to impose a specific reality on any future peace negotiations concerning the occupied Golan. This wall will also have an extremely adverse effect on the population of the occupied Golan because it will separate them from and break their geographical contiguity with their homeland, Syria. All this is taking place against the backdrop of Israel's policy of aggression against the people of the Golan, a policy that includes detention, expulsion, exorbitant fines, prosecution and driving workers from their place of employment.

By carrying out such grave acts as modifying the geographic characteristics of the occupied Syrian Golan, in particular the laying of paved and unpaved roads for military use and the construction of a permanent cement wall, the Israeli authorities have violated international law and contravened the Disengagement Agreement between the Syrian and Israeli sides, which was concluded under the auspices of the great Powers and the Security Council. The Syrian Arab Republic insists that the United Nations and, in particular, the Security Council, must shoulder its responsibilities and immediately take all necessary measures to halt this action,

which is part of Israel's ongoing campaign to cut off the occupied Syrian Golan from the Syrian homeland. It is a flagrant violation of international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981), in which the Council decided that Israel's annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and without international legal effect.

Below is a list of the families that own the appropriated land on which the wall is being erected:

- Sons of Husayn Mahmud (Qubaybah, Arid al-Mit'hanah)
- Sulayman Tarif (land that previously belonged to Abdullah Shahadhah) — sons of Jamil Al-Sayyid Ahmad
- Sons of Farid Al-Sayyid Ahmad — sons of Salih Hamud Khalil Abu Salih
- Sons of Salih Husayn Abu Salih — Isam Al-Safadi (Safadi family — around 3 dunums)
- Children of Malham Al-Safadi
- Sulayman Shams (Shams family — around 45 dunums) — Isma'il Shams
- Mahmud Shams — sons of Yusuf Abu Arar (around 7 dunums)
- Sons of Mahmud Mali (around 12 dunums) — Haza' Mali — sons of Sulayman Abu Jabal
- Sons of Husayn Abu Jabal Salih Al-Salih (east of Masil)
- Sons of Mansur Abu Jabal — sons of Hassan Mahdi Fakhruddin
- Sons of Sulayman Salman Ibrahim — sons of Bahjat Al-Halabi — sons of As'ad Al-Halabi
- Sons of Ali Al-Sabbagh — sons of Sulayman Abu Zayd — Faris Abu Zayd
- Sons of Hamzah Ibrahim — sons of Said Samarah — sons of As'ad Al-Haddad (displaced persons: sons of Fa'iz Al-Qal'ani) — sons of Jamil Husayn Rida — sons of Sa'id Khattar — sons of Ali Al-Shufi — sons of Ali Ibrahim — sons of Najib Dhib Burayk (east of Masil)
- Sons of Jamil Husayn Ali Abu Salih (east of Masil) — Mi'sarah (on the land of Jamil Sayyid Ahmad) — sons of Faris Khuza'i Abu Salih
- Sons of As'ad Armun — sons of Hamad Maddah — Sulayman Hamdi Wahbi Abu Salih
- Ghazi Faris Wahbi Abu Salih (Mi'sarat al-Dibs — east of Al-Masil)

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic